

REMARKS

By this Amendment, Applicant amends claim 1 and cancels claims 2 and 3 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein, since canceled claims 2 and 3 are incorporated into claim 1. Thus, claims 1 and 4-6 are pending. Support for amended claim 1 may be found at least in paragraphs [0009] – [0013] and [0040] – [0053], Figs. 6-11, and original claims 2 and 3. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the pending claims at least in light of the following remarks.

Applicant appreciates the courtesies shown to Applicant's representative by Examiner Ilan in the January 21 personal interview. Applicant incorporates a separate record of the substance of the interview into the following remarks. Specifically, claim 1 is amended as proposed during the personal interview.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

By this Amendment, Applicant cancels claims 2 and 3. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 2 and 3 is moot. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2 and 3.

By this Amendment, Applicant amends claim 1 such that claims 1 and 4-6 are definite. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 4-6.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over WO 98/22313 to Juchem (hereinafter "Juchem"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

By this Amendment, Applicant cancels claims 2 and 3. Accordingly, the rejection of claims 2 and 3 is moot. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claims 2 and 3.

As agreed during the personal interview, Juchem does not disclose, teach, or suggest "the plurality of inflation chambers comprising direct inflation chambers and indirect inflation

chambers...each gas outlet disposed corresponding to at least one direct inflation chamber," i.e., Juchem does not disclose, teach, or suggest indirect inflation chambers that do not have corresponding gas outlets. As shown at least in Fig. 5 and disclosed at least on page 6, line 16 – page 7, line 16 of Juchem, the plurality of apertures 23 in Juchem each communicate with a separate one of the plurality of cells 21. There are no cells 21 which do not communicate with an aperture 23 (page 7, lines 2-5 and Fig. 5). Accordingly, none of the cells in Juchem may reasonably be considered equivalent to Applicant's claimed indirect inflation chambers.

As briefly discussed during the personal interview, Applicant notes that the use of both direct and indirect inflation chambers is advantageous to the airbag device of claim 1 since, for example, the direct inflation chambers may be inflated and deployed more quickly and deployment of the airbag may be completed before every inflation chamber is fully inflated (see e.g. paragraph [0011]). Accordingly, the airbag may be deployed more quickly.

Because, Juchem does not disclose, teach, or suggest "the plurality of inflation chambers comprising direct inflation chambers and indirect inflation chambers...each gas outlet disposed corresponding to at least one direct inflation chamber," claim 1 is patentable over Juchem. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1.

The Office Action rejects claims 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Juchem in view of EP 0 967 126 A1 to Kokeguchi et al. (hereinafter " Kokeguchi "). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

This rejection is premised upon the presumption that Juchem discloses all of the features of claim 1. Because, as discussed above, Juchem does not disclose all of the features of claim 1, the rejection is improper. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

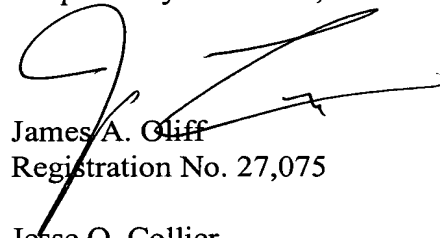
The Office Action rejects claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Juchem in view of Kokeguchi and further in view of EP 0 959 578 A2 to Haland et al. (hereinafter "Haland"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

This rejection is premised upon the presumption that Juchem discloses all of the features of claim 1. Because, as discussed above, Juchem does not disclose all of the features of claim 1, the rejection is improper. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

In view of at least the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in condition for allowance. Applicant earnestly solicits favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1 and 4-6.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, Applicant invites the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date: January 27, 2005

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